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JCS FOR J5/DDGSA
SECDEF FOR OSD(P)/STRATCAP
NAVY FOR CNO-N5JA AND DIRSSP
AIRFORCE FOR HQ USAF/ASX AND ASXP
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NSC FOR LOOK
DIA FOR LEA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/18/2019
TAGS: [KACT](#) [MARR](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [RS](#) [US](#) [START](#)
SUBJECT: START FOLLOW-ON NEGOTIATIONS, GENEVA
(SFO-GVA-VII): (U) CONVERSION OR ELIMINATION WORKING GROUP
MEETING, NOVEMBER 11, 2009

Classified By: A/S Rose E. Gottemoeller, United States
START Negotiator. Reasons: 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (U) This is SFO-GVA-VII-011.

[1](#)2. (U) Meeting Date: November 11, 2009
Time: 11:30 A.M. - 12:50 P.M.
Place: U.S. Mission, Geneva

SUMMARY

[1](#)3. (S) The second Conversion or Elimination (CorE) Working Group meeting of Session VII, chaired by U.S. chair Mr. Elliott and Russian chair Colonel Ryzhkov, addressed procedures for CorE of ICBM silo launchers and heavy bombers. The sides agreed on some text pertaining to silo launchers, and the Russian side promised to study the streamlined text proposed by the U.S. side for the remaining provisions discussed. The sides disagreed on whether silo launchers should be filled with dirt or gravel, as the United States had proposed. The Russian Delegation said the United States needed to take geography and climatology into consideration. The sides also clarified the term "tail" and "tail section" in reference to elimination of heavy bombers. Both sides agreed that the entire "tail section" could be removed.

[1](#)4. (U) Subject summary: Preliminary Matters, Filling a Silo with Gold, A Tail is a Tail, and, Overlap with General Provisions.

PRELIMINARY MATTERS

¶5. (S) Elliott first offered to review the latest U.S.-proposed draft of Subsection VI in Section III of the Protocol, "Other Procedures for Removal from Accountability."

The U.S. side had taken into account Russian suggestions to streamline repetitive wording on notifications, and hoped the subsection could be agreed and sent to conforming. Ryzhkov noted the new proposed text was concise and clear. The Russian Delegation would review it, and would reconsider its own proposed text. The Russian Delegation also provided new proposed text for Paragraph 1 of Subsection I, "General Provisions."

FILLING A SILO WITH GOLD

¶6. (S) The sides agreed to certain provisions governing elimination for silo launchers of ICBMs in Subsection 3 of Section III in the Protocol to the Treaty as follows.

Begin text:

¶2. The elimination of silo launchers of ICBMs shall be carried out using any of the following procedures:

a. The silo door shall be removed, dismantled, or destroyed, and the silo headworks and the silo shall

be destroyed by excavation to a depth of no less than eight meters or by explosion to a depth of no less than than six meters.

c. Other procedures developed by the Party conducting the elimination.End text.

¶7. (S) The two sides did not reach agreement on the second (Subparagraph b) for silo elimination involving removal of the silo door and subsequent filling of the silo. The Russian-proposed text required filling the silo with earth; the U.S. side specified filling the silo with gravel. Elliott explained that the U.S. side believed soil would be too easily removed, since water could simply be added and the resulting sludge pumped out. The U.S. side believed that adding gravel was more consistent with a permanent elimination since it would be more difficult to remove. Finally, because gravel would take longer to remove, such a process would be visible by national technical means of verification.

¶8. (S) Ryzhkov objected to Elliott's argument, entreating the U.S. side to consider the realities of Russian climate and geography. Some areas of Russia did not have gravel readily available, and the material would have to be trucked in from the Ural Mountains. In these parts of Russia, construction of a gravel road one kilometer in length would cost 1 million dollars. Filling a silo with gravel would be like filling it with gold, Ryzhkov opined. He pointed out that many U.S. silos in Colorado (sic) and Wyoming were located near mountains, where gravel was easy to obtain.

¶9. (S) Ryzhkov clarified further that when the Russian side used the word "earth," it meant more than just soil. It also meant to include the debris (stroimusor in Russian) from the adjacent above-ground structures that would be demolished in conjunction with the silo elimination. The resultant rubble would then be pushed into the silo to facilitate subsequent cultivation of the land in the area.

¶10. (S) In response to Elliott's scenario of adding water to a dirt-filled silo and pumping the mud out to reclaim the silo, Ryzhkov pointed out that the Russian silo field in Dombrovskiy was in a desert, where water was scarce and, therefore, very expensive. Finally, he pointed out that in

locations like Uzhur earth could not be easily removed because the climate was one of permafrost, with the ground frozen year-round.

¶11. (S) Elliott agreed to leave this portion of the silo elimination procedure bracketed, and pledged that the United States would go back and consider language that would capture the full scope of the intended Russian elimination process. He stated that the United States was in agreement with Russia that the key step for this procedural option was removal of the silo door. (Begin comment: Such a step exposes the silo to the environment, which would over time render it inoperable. End comment.)

¶12. (S) Elliott closed the discussion on silo elimination by presenting U.S.-proposed text for post-elimination grading. He also read U.S. provisions for inspection of any silo eliminated using the so-called "wild-card" procedure

determined by the eliminating Party at a future date. He explained that, for those procedures that were undefined in the treaty, the United States insisted on the right to inspect the completion of elimination procedures. In the case of silo elimination procedures specified in the Protocol, national technical means of verification would be adequate.

¶13. (S) Ryzhkov agreed to study the new streamlined U.S.-proposed language for silo elimination procedures, which had consolidated several paragraphs and deleted others to prevent duplication with the General Provisions for Section III. The U.S. side agreed to convey text later that day for Russian review.

A TAIL IS A TAIL

¶14. (S) The two sides moved on to a discussion of Subsection V in Section III of the Protocol to the treaty, covering Core of heavy bombers. Elliott read through and explained the new U.S.-proposed text for the section, which again had consolidated some provisions and deleted others to prevent duplication with the General Provisions for Section III.

¶15. (S) When presenting the U.S.-proposed text for procedures for heavy bomber elimination, Elliott explained the reason why the United States used the wording "tail section" rather than "tail" as proposed by the Russian side. The U.S. side wanted to make sure that both horizontal and vertical control surfaces on the rear of the heavy bomber were cut off, and was concerned that this would not be clear if only "tail" were specified.

¶16. (S) Ryzhkov responded that the Russian term used in this instance referred to the entire section of the aircraft that included both sets of control surfaces mentioned by Elliott, and that the clarification was unnecessary. (Begin comment: Later analysis of the original Russian text showed that it should have been translated "tail section" in English. End comment.)

¶17. (S) The Russian side assessed that the streamlined U.S.-proposed text was substantially the same as the Russian proposal, but pledged to study the wording more carefully. Again, the U.S. side agreed to provide a hard copy of its text later in the day.

OVERLAP WITH GENERAL PROVISIONS

¶18. (S) The Russian side expressed overall concern that the updated U.S.-proposed text had unnecessarily repeated some provisions covered by the General Provisions Subsection for Section III. Specifically, both Ryzhkov and Mr. Smirnov felt that the General Provisions for pre- and post-conversion

steps pertaining to procedures developed by the converting Party could be applied to each portion of Section III that addressed conversion. Smirnov summarized the process for "other procedures developed by the converting Party": notification of intent to convert, discussion in the

Bilateral Consultative Commission with agreement on the procedure to be used, conversion of the item, and a post-conversion demonstration. The Russian side pledged to make a close comparison between the General Provisions to the relevant U.S.-proposed language in Subsections III and V.

¶19. (S) Elliott replied that, in principle, the U.S. side agreed with the Russian side on the notion of moving repetitive language to the General Provisions. However, the U.S. side wanted to ensure that the requirements were perfectly clear in the case of each item being CorE.

¶20. (U) Documents exchanged.

- U.S.:

-- U.S.-proposed Joint Draft Text: Protocol Section III Subsection VI "Other Procedures for Removal from Accountability," (in the original English with unofficial Russian translation), dated November 11, 2009.

- Russia:

-- Russian-proposed Joint Draft Text: Protocol Section III: Conversion or Elimination Procedures (Chapeau) and Paragraph 1 for Subsection I "General Provisions," (in the original Russian), dated November 11, 2009; and

-- Russian-proposed Joint Draft Text: Treaty Article VII (in the original Russian with unofficial English translation), dated November 11, 2009.

¶21. (U) Participants:

U.S.

Mr. Elliott
LCDR Brons
Mr. Broshar
Lt Col Goodman
Mr. Dwyer
Col Fryer
Mr. Hanchett
Mr. McConnell
Ms. Purcell
LT Sicks
Dr. Hopkins (Int)

RUSSIA

Col Ryzhkov
Mr. Smirnov
Ms. Vodopolova
Mr. Voloskov
Ms. Komshilova (Int)

¶22. (U) Gottemoeller sends.
GRIFFITHS